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## **City of Asheboro Named Certified Retirement Community**

The City of Asheboro is one of the first communities to be designated a “Certified Retirement Community” by the state of North Carolina. The distinction means that the state has certified that Asheboro has what it takes to attract retirees, and that the Department of Commerce will provide promotional assistance to help encourage retirees to relocate to the area.

In a letter to the City, Assistant Commerce Secretary Henry McKoy, Jr. stated that, “Being designated a Certified Retirement Community by the North Carolina Department of Commerce means the city has passed a stringent test of readiness and met a rigorous set of requirements encompassing comprehensive community survey and assessment tools that span numerous dimensions reflective of the community’s preparedness for retiree attraction.”

The Certified Retirement Community program was created by the state in 2008. The City of Lumberton was the pilot community for the program, and was the first town to be admitted into the program. Research provided by the Department of Commerce states that an estimated 1.75 to 2 jobs are created per retiree household. In addition, retirees increase the retail and property tax base and increase a community’s deposit base, which means that banks are able to provide more loans.

The City of Asheboro chose to apply for the program as an economic development tool. “Having retirees move into Asheboro means that we’re creating new jobs, adding wisdom and experience to our community and growing our population without the need to expand services like schools,” said Mayor David Smith. “We want people of all ages to move here – this program allows us to get the word out that Asheboro is a great place in which to live.”

The City has a Retiree Attraction Committee that has met since June 2011 to explore ways to attract retirees. Now that the City has been named a Certified Retirement Community, the group and city staff will work with the state Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development to spread the word that Asheboro is a great relocation destination for retirees.

“North Carolina is one of the top states retirees are looking at, and since we’re right in the middle of the state we offer retirees the opportunity to take advantage of all that North Carolina has to offer,” said City Manager John Ogburn.

Mayor Smith agrees, “We have four beautiful seasons, a vibrant arts community, great cultural and recreational resources - we think we have exactly what many retirees are looking for, and we’re eager to welcome them to our community.”

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